6:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1939 FN17 Ngonde FN17

692 in the religious seclusion of the Kyungu. No Kyungu ever sat in public to judge his people until Mwakabenga, who reigned from 1894 to 1904. And if the nobles of Ngonde, who acted for the Kyungu in most mundane matters, only exercised judicial authority in matters immediately affecting his personal position, that was, I believe, because nothing more would have been tolerated by the chiefs. I cannot prove this point, for it only occurred to us after leaving Ngonde, but it seems probable that only under the presidency of the Kyungu himself could a central court have maintained itself; for the nobles of Ngonde were not of royal blood. Comparative evidence supports this hypothesis, and the ease with which the present Kyungu maintains his central appeal court to-day makes it still more probable.

6. *WARFARE. (MIDDLE PERIOD).*

(a) *CIVIL WAR.*

• 579 The endemic civil war of Ngonde appears rather to have resembled a series of rugby football matches without referees than the scientific mass-killing of modern Europe. "In the old days we used frequently to engage in little local fights. But always, when some occasion for war arose we used to send a message beforehand to tell the other side that we meant to fight them the next day at a certain time. And perhaps, if we had mentioned the morning, they would refuse and say they preferred the afternoon, and we would agree." (Was this always done?) "Yes, always; for if ever any group attacked suddenly and unexpectedly then everyone used to mock them for their cowardice and compare them with the Ngoni——for it was by unexpected night attacks that the Ngoni overcame us."

"And how did war start?" we asked. "Maybe a couple of boys would begin fighting, just with their fists, and as they fought another would come and join in to help his friend, then another on the other side, ——until at last yet another would join in with a spear and wound someone. Then the wounded man would be taken home bleeding, and the next day there would be war!" (And what was the point of fighting such a war?) "So that the others should be underneath and we on top. We used to fight from infancy onwards; we began as children by using mushrooms, then we took to reeds and finally, as we grew up, to sharpened stakes and spears." Such warfare seldom or never lasted for more than a single day. Cattle might be captured and houses burnt, but there was no acquisition of territory.

669 It was the territorial aim of the wars between the chiefs of Ngelenge and of Ngana which distinguished them from other civil wars; though

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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231 and will follow the caller wherever he goes. They come to be milked morning and evening, and no cow moves until her name is called. The greatest insult that can be offered to a man is to sprinkle milk on the road behind him as he passes, suggesting, "You are too incompetent to provide yourself and your family with milk to drink; I can spare some to mock you with." And each man is jealous of the quality of his herd. A year or two ago, a wedding party went to [579] pay over a cow to the bride's father. It was not a high-class animal: a bystander threw a taunt, and in the fight which followed, two men were killed, and a number wounded.

422 The man is the owner of the cattle as a rule. It is rare for the wife to own any; but sometimes a father will make his daughter a present of a cow, which becomes hers absolutely, to pass, with its increase, to her son at her death or his marriage. The husband also may set a cow apart for his wife, but it returns to him in case of divorce.

231 857 During the day the cattle are herded by the village boys, each family sending one or two in turn to the work. They have a thoroughly good time, though for the smaller boys it is rather a testing time of moral and muscle, for they have a severe apprentice-
234 ship to serve. Cows are milked by the owner usually twice a day. No one ever salutes a man while so engaged; if the milk stops, he will be accused of witchcraft. A visitor arriving at milking time will sit down and wait, neither he nor his host taking any notice of each other until the cow that is being milked

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
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273 bed at midnight to break up drunken revels, and drive to bed men who, though sternly refused permission to finish the beer, vowed themselves, in drunken sentimentality, my eternal friends. But not always do beer feasts end so happily. As in other lands, some men become jocular in drink, others quarrelsome, and many a Konde beer feast has ended in a spear fight. Beer is an accompaniment of feasts given at births, marriages, and deaths; but occasion of that sort need not be waited for. The chief may give a feast at any time; or a man who has been long away from home celebrates his return; or the hoeing season provides an excuse; but with or without occasion, an immense amount of beer is drunk every year.

•[579]

Light beer is made in many ways. A favourite is
272 made from sweet potatoes laid out to dry, pounded into flour, and mixed with flour of maize, cassava, or other material, cooked, and drunk when cool. Ground-nuts shelled and ground, put into small baskets with water, and allowed to drip dry, then mixed with *malesi* flour, and cooked, is a common drink; as is also a light drink made from the juice of sugar-cane similarly mixed and cooked. All these are non-intoxicating, and are taken along with food, or at any other time as a refreshing drink.

733 Many of the more progressive chiefs are alive to the injury done by heavy drinking, and do all in their power to stop it; and native Christians who take any part in a beer feast are excluded from the sacraments. By the action of the Government in exercising control over beer, of some of the better chiefs, and of the

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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has a disease, from which he does not himself suffer, but which passes over to the person who arouses the wrath. 787

At Karonga, if two old men fight with their fists, and tear each other's garments, they have forecasted death for each other. The death of a friend of one or the other will shortly take place. Among the Banyakyusa to the north, the fight of any two, young or old, with fists only, is a portent of the same significance. Such anger blazes up suddenly, and the two men fly at each other in blind fury, unable to restrain themselves sufficiently to go and fetch the weapons with which reasonable men fight. The fist as a weapon of war is not highly regarded by Africans generally, however dear it may be to others. 787 579

2. Unnatural actions. To invite an old man to climb a tree may seem to us more laughable than deadly; but to the Konde it is a dreadful combination of insult and forecast; it is a forecast, because such a thing is an insult so great as to be in itself a portent. The number of things that come under this head is legion; but generally, to ask an old person to do what is unnatural for an old person to do, is *kunikwa*. Little girls quite innocently removing their scanty covering in the presence of an old man, have unwittingly warned him that his days are near an end. Perhaps under the same category we may include an invitation given by a child to an old man to come and eat; to us it could not come in a more charming way; but the old Konde would turn his back indignantly on the ill-bred brat who 787 578